Homes England

Thomas Lister

COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE OPPORTUNITY

A new future for St John's Church

St John's Church, Whittingham,Preston, PR3 2JE

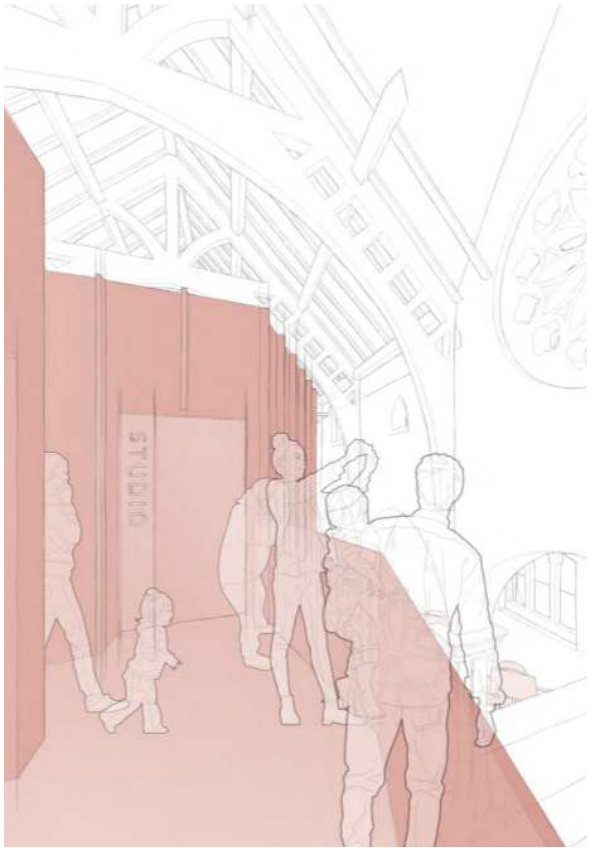
- Opportunity for community enterprises/businesses to occupy space within Grade II Listed former Church.
- Potential for single or multiple allocations of community use/commercial accommodation.
- Secluded position within the wider residential development of the former Whittingham Hospital site, set to deliver around 750 new homes.
- Flexibility of accommodation and occupational model.
- Situated within a site area of c. 0.58 acres (c. 0.23 hectares).
- Responses to the Soft Market Testing Questionnaire are to be submitted by **13:00** on **Monday, 9th November 2026.**

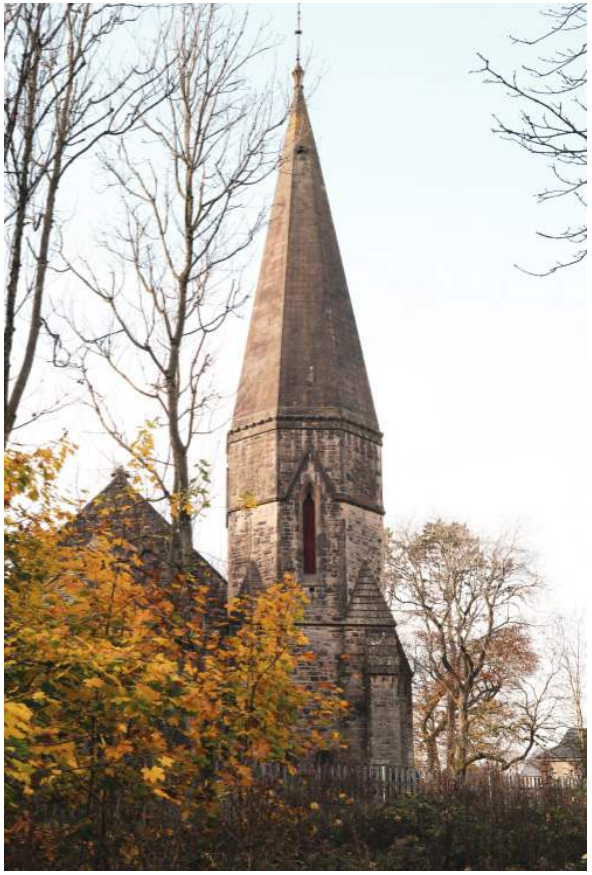
DESCRIPTION

The Whittingham Parish Council is looking at potential options to secure the future of this important local asset, comprising a disused Grade II listed Church. This will provide the opportunity for local community organisations/businesses to occupy space, and have a positive impact and provide value to the community. In 2025, the Parish Council commissioned Architects to prepare a feasibility study which concluded that St John's Church is capable of restoration and reuse. The building is structurally recoverable, capable of adaptation and remains a significant heritage and community asset.

St John's Church extends to a Gross Internal Area (GIA) of approximately 9,150 sq ft (850 sq m), with the area of the site extending to 0.58 acres (0.23 hectares).

Whilst the Church remains in in a state of considerable disrepair, funding options are being considered to enable the Church to be bought back into a useable state.





LOCATION

St John's Church is located within Whittingham, an expanding semi-rural village which is located approximately 4 miles to the north-east of Preston city centre, 1.8 miles from Junction 32 of the M6 and Junction 1 of the M55. The Church sits centrally within a large residential masterplan, yet is nestled within a secluded landscape, given its immediate boundaries include established trees. Beyond this, there is residential development to the north and west, with Whittingham Hospital to the east and Whittingham and Goosnargh Cricket Club to the south.

Vehicular access to the Church is currently from the east (Teasel Close), with limited access from the south off Main Drive of the site (see below), with consideration being given to potentially further access/egress points.

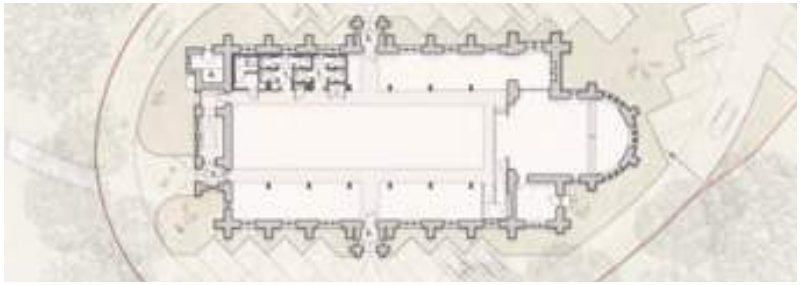
OCCUPATION MODELS

A number of options have been explored to secure the long-term future of St John's Church, with two potential Occupier/Operator models emerging.

Shell & Core – Where the owner will repair, conserve and service the building to create a flexible, characterful space ready for a future operator to make their own. This approach secures the fabric and essential infrastructure while retaining maximum flexibility over the eventual use and fit-out, providing an attractive opportunity for an experienced operator with a clear concept and established business model.

Community Use – Whereby the Church is fully fitted out as a community hub. An ambitious mixed-use community destination which could bring St John's back to life with a combination of café / bakery, nursery, children's play, co-working, events, heritage interpretation and/or flexible tenant space.

The vision is for a welcoming, multi-generational hub that is busy throughout the week – supporting local enterprise, encouraging social connection and creating a sustainable future for the building. Community uses such as café, play and co-working could generate regular activity, complemented by events, workspace and experiences.



PARKING

Whilst the Church already has adequate highway access, consideration is being given to a potential to expand this provision.

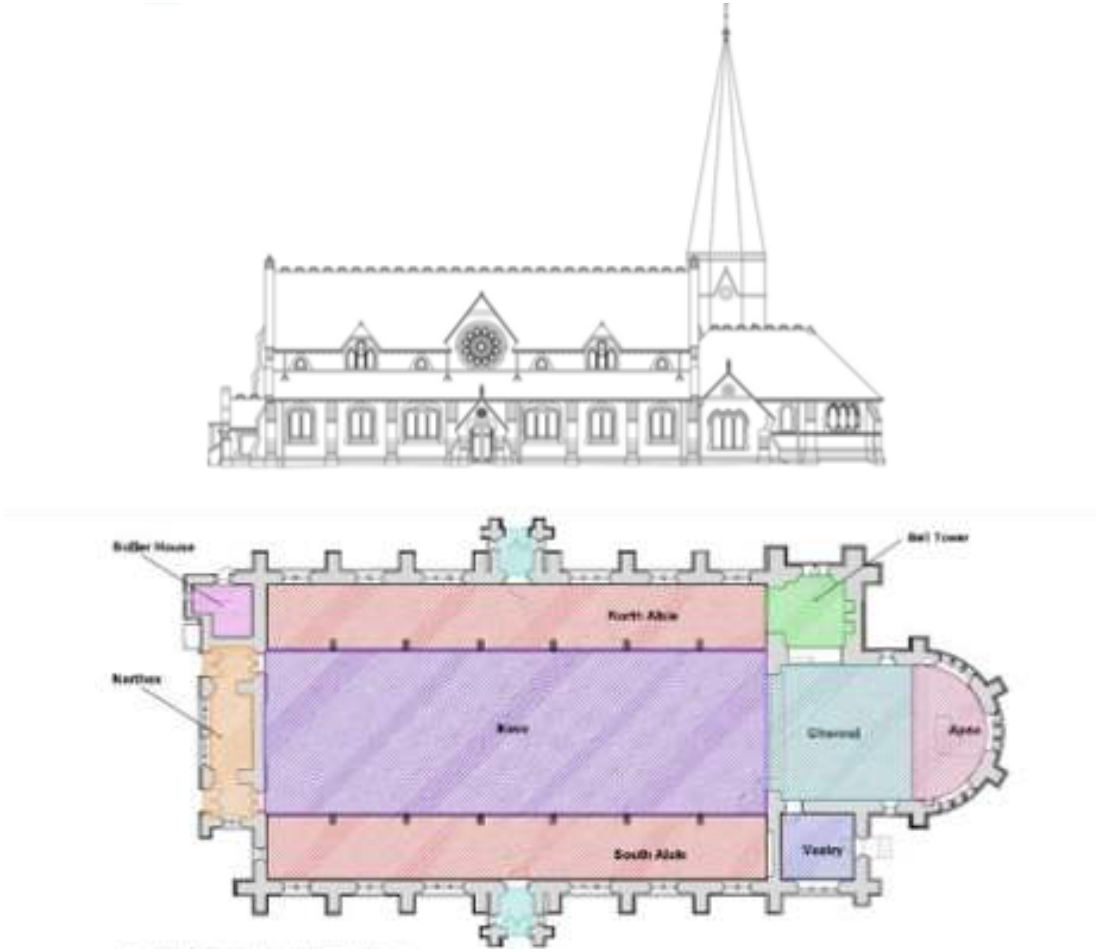
Current testing indicates that approximately 21 spaces could be accommodated within the churchyard, including accessible spaces, subject to survey and highways review.

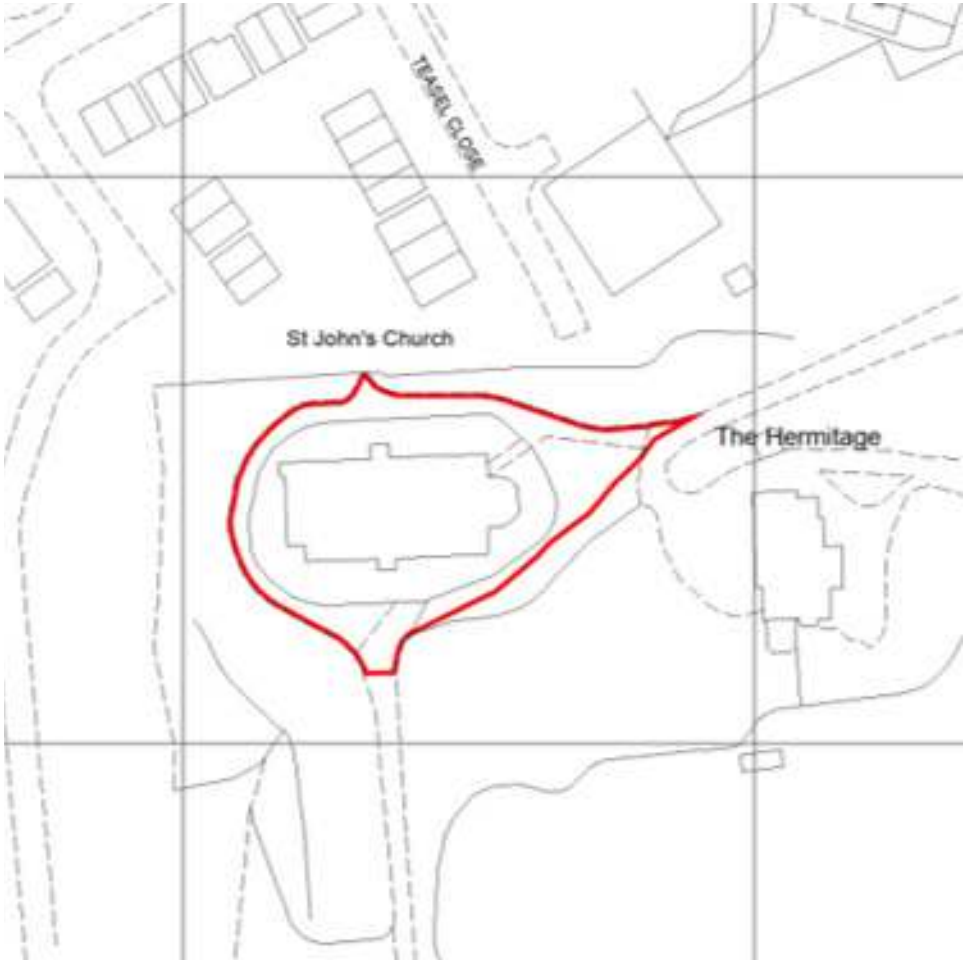
Supplementary parking may be possible on land south of St John's, potentially providing around 24 additional spaces and bringing total provision to around 45 spaces.

SOFT MARKETING QUESTIONNARE

In order to assist with the future strategy for the building the project team are keen to understand the views of potential occupiers/operators, and have prepared a number of questions in relation to this. The vision for the renovation and occupation is in an early evolving stage, and all interested parties are encouraged to take part in this Soft Market Testing Exercise to inform the strategy moving forward.

A link to the Microsoft Forms Questionnaire can be found here: **https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/Xe9P3eYUmq?origin=lprLink**





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